friendly relations with foreign states or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of an offence, for reason to be recorded in writing .... ." The Rule 419A of the Indian Telegraph Rules, 1951 framed under Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 lays down elaborate mechanism for lawful interception. As per the conditions of the telecom service licences, the Licensee shall ensure protection of privacy of communication and ensure that unauthorized interception of messages does not take place.

Introduction of VRS in BSNL

1847. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any move to introduce Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) in BSNL;

(b) the total number of employees targeted to be reduced through VRS;

(c) whether the employees and their recognized union has been consulted on the same;

(d) if so, the outcome of the consultation; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Sir, BSNL Management is considering a Voluntary Retirement Scheme for its non-executive employees. However, no VRS scheme has been approved so far.

(b) No specific numbers have been targeted for VRS. However, for assessing financial implications of the proposed VRS scheme, a tentative number of 20,000 has been taken.

(c) and (d) Representatives of employees Union have been consulted a number of times on VRS in BSNL. However, employees' union representatives are opposed to VRS in BSNL.

(e) Does not arise in view of (c) and (d) above.

Contract and casual workers in BSNL

1848. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of contract and casual workers engaged in BSNL;

(b) the numbers of those who are deployed in permanent and perennial jobs;

(c) whether these workers are covered by PF, ESI and Minimum Wages Act; and

(d) the steps being taken to regularize the contract workers engaged in permanent/perennial nature of jobs according to the rules of Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Sir, 12830 contract and casual labourers are engaged in BSNL.